

Soviets offer Gulf naval escort

MOSCOW (R) — A Moscow Foreign Ministry spokesman said Tuesday three oil tankers chartered to Kuwait for three years could be escorted by Soviet naval vessels if needed. The spokesman, Gennady Gerasimov, told reporters at a regular briefing that the charter agreement, on which he gave no specific details, could be extended after the first three years. Gerasimov was confirming reports from diplomatic sources in Kuwait who said on Monday Kuwait had agreed to charter the tankers from Moscow in a move to protect its oil exports through the war-torn Gulf. "If necessary, they will be protected by Soviet vessels," Gerasimov added. He did not say how it would be decided when protection was required. According to the Kuwait-based diplomats, the agreement followed months of talks by Kuwait with Moscow and Washington on ways to secure its oil lifeline. Iran has attacked Kuwaiti-connected vessels in retaliation for what it says is Kuwait's support for Iraq in the Gulf war. Moscow has sought to maintain neutrality in the conflict, urging both sides to make peace. But recently it has indicated disapproval of Iran's insistence on continuing the war.

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Mubarak meets businessmen

CAIRO (Petra) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak met in Cairo on Tuesday with a delegation of Jordanian businessmen visiting Egypt for talks on promoting trade and economic cooperation between Jordan and Egypt. The meeting was attended by Jordan's Ambassador to Egypt Hisham Hamamah. Following the meeting, Mr. Mamboud Abu Hassan, who leads the delegation, said that President Mubarak expressed deep satisfaction with the strong economic links between the two countries. The president stressed the importance of Arab solidarity and voiced regret over continuing differences among Arab governments, Mr. Abu Hassan said. The president, he added, urged businessmen of both countries to achieve further coordination in economic and trade matters and also to develop their exchange of information and expertise in the fertilisers industry, agriculture and plasticulture. The delegation earlier toured the October Six industrial city in Egypt and were briefed on its activities and services.

Justice ministers thank Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Participants in the meetings of the Council of Arab Justice Ministers on Tuesday sent a cable of thanks to His Majesty King Hussein at the conclusion of the council's fifth session in Amman. The cable paid tribute to the King's patronage of the council and said the King's support "contributed to the positive results and recommendations aimed at bringing about unified Arab legislations. The participants also sent a similar cable to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, in which they highly praised his keynote address at the outset of the session. Earlier on Tuesday, the ministers visited the Karamet Battle site in the Jordan Valley and laid a wreath at the Martyrs Monument there.

Syrian minister visits Jordan Valley

IRBID (Petra) — Syrian Minister of Interior Mohammad Ghabash on Tuesday visited the frontlines of the 12th Royal Mechanised Division and the Jordan Valley region. Mr. Ghabash, who was accompanied by his Jordanian counterpart Rajai Dajani, was met by Irbid Governor Akram Al Nasar and senior officers who briefed him on the strategic importance of the northern Jordan Valley area. Later, the minister visited Wadi Al Arab Dam and heard a briefing by Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) President Munther Haddadin on the East Ghor Canal and its usefulness for the valley.

Mubarak's party gains more seats

CAIRO (AP) — President Hosni Mubarak's party chalked up further parliamentary gains Tuesday, winning eight of nine seats contested in runoff elections, according to official results. This brought the total strength of the National Democratic Party (NDP) to 347 seats in the People's Assembly, which has 448 elected seats. The constitution empowers Mr. Mubarak to appoint up to 10 members of parliament.

U.S. sends home 5 Marines from Vienna

VIENNA (R) — Five U.S. Marines guarding their country's Vienna embassy have been sent home under suspicion of having unauthorized contacts with local nationals while previously serving in East bloc countries, a U.S. embassy spokeswoman said Tuesday. She told Reuters the five were sent home on Sunday for further investigations, but there was no suspicion at this stage that their cases involved espionage. (See related story on page 8).

Moscow denies radiation leak

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet Union on Tuesday denied that radiation detected in West Germany and Sweden came from the Soviet Union. Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennady Gerasimov told reporters that the Soviet Union's radiation detection equipment is "functioning well and no discharges of radioactive emissions have been registered on the territory of the Soviet Union." He said if anyone is detecting radioactive releases they should look elsewhere. (See related story on page 8).

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Birzeit killing sparks violent Arab protests throughout W. Bank

RAMALLAH (Agencies) — Hundreds of protesters hurled rocks at Israeli troops in towns throughout the West Bank Tuesday and the Israeli army clamped a curfew on the occupied Gaza Strip hometown of a Palestinian student shot dead by Israeli soldiers on Monday.

An Israeli spokesman said the dawn to dusk curfew was imposed on Rafiah, an occupied Gaza Strip town bordering Egypt, in the wake of demonstrations by rock-throwing Palestinians to protest the slaying of Musa Al Hanafi, 23.

Hanafi was shot to death when Israeli troops stormed the Birzeit University campus in the West Bank on Monday to disperse hundreds of student protesters. The army closed the 3,000-student campus for four months, citing the violent clashes.

The current cycle of violence began when a firebomb hurled into a car Saturday night killed a Jewish woman and seriously injured five other Jewish settlers.

An army official reported rock throwing and demonstrations in

bags strewn in the streets. The atmosphere was tense, with schools closed and shops shuttered on the second day of a commercial strike.

An army jeep rounding up teenage protesters patrolled the streets, stopping occasionally to question Arabs, check their identity cards and order them home.

The Palestine Press Service, which monitors news in the occupied territories, also reported demonstrations in the West Bank towns of Bethlehem, Nablus and Jenin, as well as at the Balata refugee camp. It said there were no reported injuries.

Palestinian protesters also demonstrated outside the College of Medical Professions, just south of Ramallah, setting up roadblocks and burning tyres soaked with gasoline.

The protesters, which included women, chanted "Israel no, PLO," as they hurled rocks in the direction of dozens of Israeli troops patrolling about 50 metres away.

Reporters also observed evidence of early-morning demonstrations in Ramallah, with rocks, broken glass and half-burnt gar-

ramallah Tuesday. In Ramallah, a news photographer saw troops fire rubber bullets and tear-gas canisters to disperse dozens of demonstrators outside a girl's school in the Manara Square.

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Syrians deploy near Sidon

SIDON, Lebanon (Agencies) — Syrian troops deployed Tuesday at the outskirts of the port city of Sidon, the farthest south they have been since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The move was described as aimed at ending a 23-month-old war between Palestinians and the Shi'ite Amal militia around refugee camps and highlands east of the city.

Officials at the Syrian command in Beirut said 120 Syrian paratroopers deployed down a 35-kilometre stretch of the coastal highway up to the Awali River on Sidon's northern outskirts.

The road links the southern provincial capital with Beirut.

The Syrians immediately started to man checkpoints along with Lebanese army soldiers who took control of the road from Druze and Amal militiamen on March 4.

"There will be complete coordination between the Lebanese troops and the Syrians," a Syrian

officer at Awali told reporters.

Reporters have said that Israel has warned that it would not tolerate a Syrian military presence south of the Awali, calling the river an "Israeli red line."

The river runs roughly 60

kilometres north of the Israeli border. The deployment force is equipped with light automatic weapons without any tanks or armoured personnel carriers.

Colonel Ali Deeb, commander of the deploying force, told reporters at Awali that he has no orders to enter Sidon at the time being. He said his troops would patrol the Beirut-Sidon highway from the three checkpoints.

The Syrian army, which has a 1976 peacekeeping mandate in Lebanon from the 21-nation Arab League, was last in the Sidon region in 1982. It pulled out when Israel invaded Lebanon that year.

The Syrian force is part of a 7,500-strong contingent dispatched to west Beirut on Feb. 22 to

curb a three-year anarchist reign of feuding militias at the request of Muslim government leaders.

The Syrians have since closed

down all militia offices in the

capital's western sector and inter-

vened to ease a five-month-old

siege of two Palestinian refugee

camps by Amal militiamen.

Tuesday's expansion of the Syrian military intervention is aimed at speeding up a withdrawal of Palestinian fighters from the highlands they captured from Amal last Nov. 24, officials at the Syrian command said. They de-

cined Amal to be named.

Amal has been demanding that

pullout as a precondition for lifting

its military siege of Beirut's

Shatiha and Bourj Al Barajneh

refugee camps.

Amal men have maintained

positions ringing the two shanty-

towns, although some 900 Syrian

paratroopers deployed at their

main entrances last week to relax

Amal's food blockade.

Dynamite blasts rock west Beirut

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Six bombs exploded in a 10-minute span in Syrian-controlled west Beirut on Tuesday and police said four civilians were wounded.

It was the biggest single-day bomb blitz in Beirut's mainly Muslim western sector since Syria deployed 7,500 troops Feb. 22 to end three years of militia anarchism.

Tuesday's blasts raised the number of bombings since the Syrian intervention to 56.

Police said the blasts were caused by sticks of dynamite buried by unidentified extremists from a speeding blue Peugeot car in the Hamra commercial district and the nearby residential district of Verdun.

Most of the dynamite exploded on rubbish piled up on street corners of the once-fashionable Ras Beirut district, police said. Several cars were damaged and the windows of surrounding apartment blocks were shattered, residents reported.

Syria's chief of military intelligence in Lebanon, Brigadier Ghazi Kanaan, said his soldiers detained several people suspected of involvement in "garbage bomb" attacks.

The latest blasts also came less than 24 hours after fresh fighting erupted between rival forces across the Lebanese capital.

Artillery shells and mortar bombs slammed into both sectors of the city.

Saudis said seeking Ramadan truce in Gulf; Khomeini restates refusal

LONDON (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia is apparently attempting to negotiate a ceasefire in the Iran-Iraq war to coincide with the start of the fasting month of Ramadan on April 29, the Times of London reported Tuesday.

The newspaper quoted unidentified Iranian sources as saying that "substantial progress has been made" in secret talks between Iran and Saudi officials representing Iraq. The sources were quoted as saying that a ceasefire would mark the start of peace talks.

Neither the Saudis nor the Iraqis would confirm that talks are under way, the paper said.

It quoted the sources as saying that a leading member of Iran's supreme defence council, Dr. Kamal Kharrasi, met in London last month with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal during King Fahd's state visit to Britain.

Both sides "appear ready to make substantial concessions if the Iranian interpretation of progress so far proves correct," the newspaper said.

It said a "face-saving formula" was being negotiated to accommodate Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's insistence that there can be no peace while Iraqi President Saddam Hussein remains in power.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Khamenei on Tuesday dismissed calls for a Gulf war ceasefire during Ramadan, saying



REGENT VISITS MAFRAQ SCHOOL:

Regent, on Tuesday visits a classroom at a school in Mafraq (See story on page 3)

PLO factions continue dialogue; Syria launches new initiative

By Lamis K. Andoni in Algiers

A PALESTINIAN national dialogue entered its second day here on Tuesday and informed sources said Syria had proposed that it would back efforts for reunifying the ranks of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) subject to certain conditions.

As various factions of the PLO met here and continued discussions over means and ways to reunite rival PLO groups under the umbrella of the organisation led by Chairman Yasser Arafat, well-placed Palestinian sources said Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad, in a meeting with former PNC Speaker Khaled Al Fahoun on Monday, expressed willingness to receive a PLO delegation representing all factions if all factions endorsed the Tripoli document.

The sources who spoke to the Jordan Times on Tuesday said the Syrian proposal said that "if all factions endorsed the Tripoli document, everybody without exception would be welcome to Damascus," thus indicating that the Syrian leadership might be willing to reconsider its opposition to Mr. Arafat.

However, Fahoun sources said the movement could not fully endorse the Tripoli document since it stipulated the declaration as null and void the 17th session of the PNC, held in Amman in 1984, a severance of all PLO contacts with Egypt and several other organisational reforms.

The Palestinian sources here were divided on the Syrian proposal. Some of them viewed it as a welcome development but said any visit to Damascus by it should be taken up only after the PNC was convened as scheduled.

Others viewed the Syrian initiative as an effort at delaying the convening of the PNC.

Official Algerian sources told the Jordan Times that Algerian Foreign Minister Ahmad Taleb Ibrahim left Algiers for Damascus with a message from Algerian President Chadli Benjedid to President Assad. The message, said the sources, included an Algerian and Palestinian reiteration that the convening of the PNC would be welcome to Damascus, thus indicating that the Syrian leadership might be willing to reconsider its opposition to Mr. Arafat.

The sources added that an official invitation had already been sent to President Assad along with Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, a key player in the ongoing efforts to reunify the PLO, to attend the opening session of the PNC.

The Palestinian sources who spoke to the Jordan Times on Tuesday said the Syrian proposal conveyed to Mr. Fahoun also included an implicit warning to the Damascus-based Palestinian factions attending the Algiers talks. They said Syria had said that its stand towards these factions, whose leaders reportedly

(Continued on page 3)

Tindemans arrives in Amman

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Belgian Foreign Minister Leo Tindemans arrived here late Tuesday for talks expected to focus on efforts towards convening an international conference on the Middle East under U.N. auspices to find a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Mr. Tindemans, president of the European Community (EC) Council of Ministers, was met upon arrival by Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri and other senior officials.

During his stay here, Mr. Tindemans is scheduled to be received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and other government leaders for talks on possible EC contribution to help Jordan's efforts for convening the proposed international conference with the participation of all the parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Belgium's ambassador to Jordan, Mr. Guido Vanhaege, was quoted as saying at AP that Mr. Tindemans would try "to make more precise the elements which could lead to an international peace conference."

In Brussels, Belgian government sources quoted by Reuters said Mr. Tindemans' talks in Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia would focus on the obstacles to convening a conference as well as details of how it might be organised, its terms of reference and who would take part.

Mr. Tindemans has made the Middle East a focus of his six-month tenure as chairman of the EC Council of Ministers, which ends July 1, and oversaw a council meeting in February that endorsed the idea of an international peace conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Libya continues air raids on lost positions in northern Chad

OUADI DOUM, Chad (R) — Routed in the sands of northern Chad, Libya has launched a series of air attacks against its lost desert stronghold in an attempt to erase the record of its humiliating defeat.

Libyan bombers, their powerful engines muffled by the altitude, give little warning of their arrival, appearing suddenly over-head with their delta wings glinting in the central African sun-light.

The Soviet-built Sukhoi and MiG planes at first resemble gliders rather than planes of war as they soar with eerie silence over the vast, uninhabited desert that surrounds Libya's former air base at Ouadi Doum, captured by Chad on March 22.

But a series of loud thuds followed by great clouds of sand and rock break the uneasy calm as 500 kilogramme bombs crash into the barren ground.

Libya, despite its rout on the ground, still controls the skies of northern Chad and has made repeated forays to the area last week, pairs of Libyan bombers made three separate raids against the Ouadi Doum base, attacking in the morning and afternoon with clockwork regularity.

White tracers etched the sky as Chad troops tried to hit the high-flying bombers, which rarely descend below 20,000 feet (6,000 metres) for fear of the Chadian shoulder-held SAM-7 and U.S.-supplied "Red-Eye" anti-aircraft missiles.

Chadian soldiers have shot down two planes in the area in the past three weeks and proudly escorted foreign reporters to view the charred remnants of a Czechoslovak-made L39 light bomber downed on April 7.

Its wreckage lies scattered for hundreds of metres around a blackened central crater, with maimed portions of the Libyan pilot's body spread about a parachute that clearly never had time to open.

Cyprus deadlock is bad news for Kyprianou ahead of polls

NICOSIA (R) — The refusal of Turkish Cypriots to talk to Greek Cypriots unless they accept a United Nations draft Cyprus accord they have already rejected is bad news for President Spyros Kyprianou, politicians and diplomats say.

Mr. Kyprianou's political opponents, determined to thwart his bid for a third five-year term next February, are likely to gain from the continuing diplomatic deadlock.

"President Kyprianou would like some movement on the national issue during campaign year but, with the opposition snapping at his heels, I don't see him getting any leeway," a Western diplomat said.

Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash said he would agree to new Cyprus talks only if Greek Cypriots accepted a "draft framework agreement" for a federal republic issued a year ago as part of U.N. efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem.

The island has been virtually partitioned since Turkey occupied the northern third in 1974 following an abortive coup in Nicosia led by officers of the junta then ruling Greece.

Mr. Kyprianou has said the draft accord, for a power-sharing federal executive to reunite Cyprus, fails to address key issues — the withdrawal of 23,000 Turkish troops, freedom of movement and property ownership, and in-

stays short of the desert region, known as "useless Chad" to former French colonisers.

When the first group of foreign reporters visited the area last week, pairs of Libyan bombers made three separate raids against the Ouadi Doum base, attacking in the morning and afternoon with clockwork regularity.

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Emboldened by such hits, Chadian fighters show little fear of the bombers and only laughed when reporters asked that a tour of the runway be cut short after one bomb fell nearby, sending shrapnel and stones flying by.

Because of their altitude, the Libyan bombing raids lack precision but have left a series of craters around the 3,900-metre aluminium plate runway on which captured aircraft and helicopters now stand collecting dust.

Seven Czechoslovak L39 bombers and a Soviet-made MiG-24 helicopter were parked intact along the air-strip between the burnt out shells of other abandoned aircraft.

At one end of the airstrip, reporters saw the remains of a second Soviet-built attack helicopter apparently destroyed by Libyan cluster bombs dropped by parachute.

"They have been beaten morally and physically so they are now trying to destroy what they left behind," said Chadian officer Tchatchao Koso.

Under pressure from France which is eager to study the captured equipment, Chadian forces have begun evacuating some of the weaponry.

Several batteries of SAM-6 missiles that ringed the desert

compound have been transported along with radar guidance systems to a more secure Franco-Chadian base at Kalait, some 280 kilometres south east of Ouadi Doum.

While concentrating most of their fire power on the Ouadi Doum compound, Libyan bombers have also carried out a series of raids on other captured positions.

Soon after Libyan troops pulled out of the key northern oasis of Faya-Largeau after the Ouadi Doum debacle, Libyan bombers launched several raids against the town.

Reporters who visited the oasis, the largest town in northern Chad and captured by the government on March 27, saw that a group of mud-built houses near the airstrip that had been completely destroyed by Libyan bombs.

Levelled by the force of the blast, the area now lies littered in rubble, though like much of Faya it appears to have been minimally damaged.

Sporadic and largely inaccurate attacks have also been reported against the north eastern oasis town of Fada, which fell to government troops on Jan. 2 after their first major victory in a drive to oust Libyan forces.

Beirut camp medical staff arrive in Cyprus

LARNACA, Cyprus (AP) — Pauline Cutting, a British doctor who survived a five-month siege of Beirut's Bourj Al Barajneh refugee camp, arrived in Cyprus with two members of her medical team Tuesday after being threatened by Shi'ite Muslim militiamen for helping the Palestinians.

"We received messages that we would be cut up and were advised to leave," Cutting, 37, of north London, told reporters, as she left a ferry boat that brought her to Larnaca from Jounieh, a Falangist-held port north of Beirut.

She arrived with nurse Susan Wighton, 28, of Glasgow, and Ben Alofs, a Dutch male nurse, who had helped her treat hundreds of Palestinians wounded in the camps fighting.

Cutting, looking haggard and pale after her ordeal, said they had been escorted out of Bourj Al Barajneh Monday by Syrian soldiers who moved into Beirut on Feb. 22 to end factional fighting.

"Getting to the airport road was the most scary bit," Ms. Wighton said.

She giggled and drew her hand across her throat to show what she felt would have happened to the medical team if they had fallen into the hands of the Shi'ite gunmen.

John Gray, Britain's ambassador to Lebanon, met the team on Beirut's Airport Highway which runs only a few hundred metres from the camp, and drove them across the city's dividing green line to the relative safety of the Christian sector.

"We were sad to leave our friends behind. If you've lived and worked to help people in a difficult time you feel sad to leave them. We're here safe, and they're still there," Cutting said.

Cutting said she had worked in the sprawling shantytown camp on Beirut's southern outskirts for 15 months.

She said the most difficult time came recently "when we felt the camp was starting to collapse and that the Shi'ites might come in and kill us all, but the Palestinians managed to hold on."

A total of 136 people were killed and 800 wounded during the time she and Ms. Wighton spent in the camp, she added.

The situation had improved over the last week after Syrian troops moved into the camp and lifted the siege, she added.

"I'd like to go back after a rest," Cutting said.

Wighton said she'd like to return as well. The nurse added that she would like to spend a few days in Cyprus before going back to Britain.

"I feel more sad than relieved to be out of the camp," she said.

"The most touching moment was when many of our friends gathered around us as we were leaving the camp yesterday to say goodbye," she said.

Vinshubsky said he discovered fabrication of evidence in a court

Turkey formally applies to join EC

BRUSSELS (R) — Turkey formally applied Tuesday to join the European Community (EC), Turkey's minister of state in charge of relations with the Community said.

Ali Bozer said he had submitted his country's application to become the 13th member of the bloc at a meeting with Belgian Foreign Minister Leo Tindemans, who is current president of the Community's Council of Ministers.

"This is an historic moment for my country," Mr. Bozer told reporters. He said he hoped the Community would agree soon to Turkey's entry.

Community officials say Turkey's application has been made in the face of fierce resistance by Greece and against the advice of other members who feel it is premature.

This opposition and the lengthy bureaucratic process leading up to entry make it unlikely that Turkey will be able to join the bloc this century, they say.

Mr. Bozer said at his meeting with Mr. Tindemans he had reaffirmed "the determination of my country to join the European Community and the determination of the Turkish people to share in its destiny."

"We hope for an affirmative response in the near future," Mr. Tindemans, after meeting Mr. Bozer, said: "I shall in an objective and non-discriminatory manner follow the procedures of the Council (of Ministers)."

Diplomats interpreted this to mean that Turkey's application would be fairly considered in spite of deep reservations over the move within the Community.

Mr. Tindemans said procedural moves to consider the application would begin on April 27 when he presented Turkey's request to a session of EC foreign ministers in Luxembourg.

After consultations with the Community's legal experts, ministers would then decide whether to forward the application.

A final decision to enter formal negotiations with Ankara would require unanimous backing from all member states.

Diplomats here and in Ankara say the application would pose a dilemma for the EC, which would want to assure Turkey that it was valued as part of NATO but at the same time make clear that Community membership would pose huge problems.

The entry of another relatively poor Mediterranean country

would put a heavy new burden on the Community's crisis-ridden finances and complicate further its lumbering decision-making process, officials here noted.

Several leading industrialised EC members have tried to dissuade Turkey from making the long-discussed formal application until the Community has had more time to digest the accession of Spain and Portugal, the officials said.

Some countries also want Ankara and the EC to implement the 24-year-old association agreement fully before discussing Turkey's entry.

Other concerns about Turkish entry focus on the stability of Turkish democracy, re-established four years ago after a 1980 military coup, concern about its human rights record and the perceived weakness of its economy.

Greece takes "wait and see" stance

Greece took a "wait and see" stance Tuesday on Turkey's formal application to join the European Community and said it awaited the reaction of its EC partners with interest.

Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal has said he accepts membership will take a long time to achieve but wants an early commitment to it.

Athens has made clear it will ultimately block Ankara's application unless the two countries' bitter territorial disputes are settled.

But when asked by reporters to Tuesday for Greece's reaction to Turkey's formal application, government spokesman Yannis Roubatis said merely: "Greece awaits with great interest the reactions of other EC partners. It is an issue that pertains not only to Greece."

Community officials in Brussels said Turkey's application was made not only in the face of resistance by Greece but against the advice of other members who feel it is premature.

But when asked by reporters to Tuesday for Greece's reaction to Turkey's formal application, government spokesman Yannis Roubatis said merely: "Greece awaits with great interest the reactions of other EC partners. It is an issue that pertains not only to Greece."

The newspaper said the man implicated in the affair had resigned from his post several months ago and was promoted to a senior position at a state-owned company.

Most Israeli newspaper reports on the alleged corruption mentioned an article published last week by Koteret Rashit weekly about Yossi Ginosar, a former senior agent in the Shin Bet security service.

Ginosar, 41, was one of 11 members of the Shin Bet, including former head Avraham Shamir, who were pardoned by President Chaim Herzog for their role in the scandal that dominated the headlines last year.

Shin Bet agents beat two Palestinian hijackers to death in April 1984 and allegedly falsified evidence and lied about their role in subsequent investigations.

Koteret Rashit reported that Ginosar "ran a campaign of fabricating and altering evidence in this affair."

U.S. to take new look at Iranian opposition group

WASHINGTON (AP) — A State Department official said Monday it will revise official U.S. government statements about an Iranian opposition group but foresees no change in policy towards the organisation that has been accused of terrorism.

The department has long steered clear of the People's Mujahedeen organisation of Iran, even though two House of Representatives members say the United States should at least talk with the group as part of a strategy of reaching out to Iranians opposed to Ayatollah Khomeini.

"We're going to issue a new statement" on the Mujahedeen, said a department official, who spoke on condition he not be identified.

The purpose of the statement, which was yet to be written in final form, is to add nuances, he said, adding: "There is no change in our view of the Mujahedeen anticipated."

Earlier in the month, the State Department reiterated its 1985 position that mere opposition to Khomeini "is no reason for us to support a group which has engaged in terrorist actions for several years."

The Tower report contained a letter purportedly written by Memanchi Ghorbanifar, an Iranian middleman in the weapons deal, to a contact in Iran.

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FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport. Tel. (06) 532005, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS ROYAL JORDANIAN FLIGHTS (Terminal 1)

10:00 — Aqaba (RJ) 09:35 — Tripoli (PK) 10:35 — Rome (AZ) 11:00 — Damascus (TY) 11:25 — Cairo (MS) 11:50 — Doha, Muscat (GF) 12:05 — Kuwait (KU) 12:45 — Kuwait (LN) 13:00 — Samut (TY) 13:15 — Manila, Jakarta (TA) 13:30 — Bagdad (TA) 13:45 — Karachi (PK)

Arab, foreign psychiatrists discuss latest advances in mental health care

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Prominent Arab and foreign psychiatrists gathered here on Tuesday to discuss wide ranging issues related to their specializations including the latest advances in biological and child psychiatry, drug dependence and psychotherapy.

The three-day pan-Arab congress, which was inaugurated by Her Majesty Queen Noor, will discuss a total of 100 working papers in a bid to highlight the latest developments in this field.

More than 200 doctors and educationalists from 18 Arab countries and foreign countries and organisations crowded the main auditorium of the Royal Cultural Centre to attend the opening ceremony of the long-awaited conference. The last congress was held in Cairo in 1979. Political circumstances resulting from the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli Camp David peace accord led to an eight-year delay in convening the third pan-Arab assembly on psychiatry.

The Jordan Association of Psychiatrists (JAP), the Arab Federation of Psychiatrists (AFP) and the World Psychiatric Association (WPA).

In his keynote address to the opening ceremony, Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh paid tribute to Queen Noor's keen interest in and constant support for upgrading the situation of integrated psychiatric care in Jordan and to improve the conditions of all medical and administrative manpower working in the field.

One week ago, Queen Noor inaugurated Jordan's first-ever comprehensive National Centre for Mental Health (NCMH), marking a new stage of development in the area of treatment, care and rehabilitation offered to psychiatric and mentally ill patients in the Kingdom. The NCMH includes Jordan's first detoxification ward for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts and alcoholics.

"Her Majesty's presence today is a manifestation of her sincere appreciation for all workers in the field of psychiatry and for all efforts exerted to improve psychiatric care given to the citizens of Jordan," said Dr. Hamzeh.

Referring to his ministry's efforts over the past year and its



Her Majesty Queen Noor on Tuesday attends the opening session of a pan-Arab conference on psychiatry (Petra photo)

progress in the arena of psychiatric health care, Dr. Hamzeh said that 12 psychiatric clinics have been opened throughout Jordan in addition to the NCMH. The minister, who chairs the National Committee for Psychiatric Health Care (NCPHC), set up in 1985 to determine the policy of psychiatric health care in Jordan, expressed hope that the third congress would further consolidate the participant countries' march in extending more psychiatric health care to citizens.

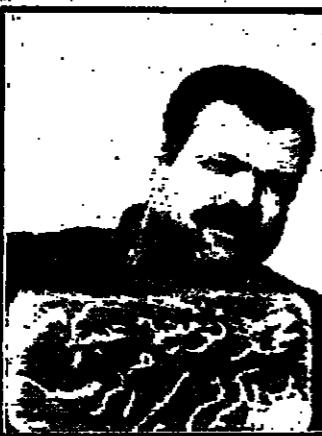
Chairman of the congress Adnan Al Takriti presented Her Majesty the conference shield in appreciation for her patronage of the three-day event. In his speech, Dr. Takriti, who is also president of JAP, said the assembly would strengthen international cooperation in psychiatry among all concerned bodies.

The JPA president also hailed the steadfastness of the Palestinian psychiatrists living and working in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Secretary general of the AFP Mahmoud Abdul Gawad also spoke during the opening ceremony. He expressed hope that the AFP would be able to compensate for the eight-year stalemate in its activities in order to upgrade and develop the situation of psychiatric health care in the Arab World in terms of research, treatment and prevention.

Seminars on the sidelines

In addition to the conference's main working sessions, three seminars on Islam and psychiatric health, psychiatric health care in



Mrs. Boeker hosts charity function

AMMAN (J.T.) — The wife of the American ambassador to Jordan, Mrs. Margaret Boeker, held a garden tea party at her home in Amman on Tuesday to raise contributions to benefit the Al Husseini Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped.

Addressing the party was President Princess Maha, wife of Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ibn Zaid. She outlined the objective and the services of the society and its projects. She also expressed appreciation for Mrs. Boeker and the guests for their support for the society. She said that the society, which was founded in 1971, gives care to more than 100 children, mostly orphans or handicapped who cannot attend normal schools. The society offers full accommodation to 40 such children and partial accommodation to others.

His Majesty King Hussein contributed a piece of land for the society to build a centre which was inaugurated in 1984 and which was financed by Oman through the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund.

Tindemans arrives

(Continued from page 1)

turned down an urgent summons by Mr. Assad to Damascus earlier this week, would depend on whether the Algiers' meetings produced an agreement that the PLO would end all its contacts with the Egyptian government which would declare as null and void the Amman session of the PNC. "Damascus will not prevent any faction from attending the PNC, but it will not encourage any faction to do so," the sources quoted the Syrian message as saying.

George Habash, head of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), one of the Damascus-based factions attending the talks here, addressed the morning session on Tuesday of the Palestinian national dialogue.

Dr. Habash, hitherto an avowed opponent of Mr. Arafat, was said to have indicated new flexibility in his address, although he had not dropped his demand that the PLO "closes its Cairo gate," meaning contacts with the Egyptian government. Dr. Habash said the restoration of the unity of the PLO was "the top priority for the PFLP at this stage."

However, he said, "the goal of unity should not be separated from sound and strong basis for national Palestinian unity."

The PFLP leader said the reconciliation efforts had gone "a long way towards the restoration of this unity after Mr. Arafat announced Fatah's agreement to abrogate the Feb. 11, 1985, Jordan-PLO agreement." The PLO chairman made the announce-

Ministry reviews plans for communications services

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Communications Muhieddin Al Husseini Tuesday chaired a meeting to discuss the ministry's projects included in the current five-year national development plan.

At the outset of the meeting the minister stressed the need for including remote regions of Jordan in the national postal, telegraphic and telephone services in accordance with a given programme.

During the meeting, which was attended by the ministry's under-secretary Mansour Ibrahimi, directors of communications departments and other senior ministry officials, a general review of the post offices which will be opened in 1987 was made.

The ministry's director of planning submitted a working paper dealing with the constraints that

have impeded opening some of the new centres and post offices and he also submitted proposals for overcoming such problems.

Another report on the fast mail delivery system and the contacts for including more countries in the service was also reviewed at the meeting. To date, Jordan is linked with 20 Arab and foreign countries in the fast mail delivery system which was initiated last year. Directors of ministry departments submitted reports on the work of each section and proposals about training courses and seminars on postal affairs.

The meeting, which was attended by members of the ministry's higher planning committee, decided to hold other sessions on the first Tuesday of every month.

Jaber back from UNCHS conference in Nairobi

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Yousef Hamdan Al Jaber has returned to Amman from Nairobi, Kenya, where he headed Jordan's delegation to the 10th meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements (UNCHS) which opened on April 6.

In a statement upon his return, the minister said that the meetings were particularly important as they were held on the 10th anniversary of the UNCHS and because the delegations discussed pressing issues pertaining to shelter for the homeless.

An address he made on behalf of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to the conference was regarded as one of the conference's documents and drew support from all delegations, the minister continued. The conference received several resolutions related to the occupied Arab territories and the danger posed to Arab citizens under Israeli rule in view of Israel's continued arbitrary actions and the building of Jewish settlements on Arab

lands, and delegations called for extending help to the people of the occupied Arab lands through Jordan, the minister noted.

He said that the Jordanian-sponsored economic and social programme for the occupied territories was supported by various delegations.

Mr. Jaber outlined Israel's measures against the Arab population in the West Bank to the conference and said that nearly 2,738,000 dunums of Arab-owned land had been seized by the Israelis since 1967. He also pointed out that the Israelis have built 195 colonies and have been depriving the Arabs from proper land for building their own homes. The minister also outlined Jordan's housing programme to the delegates.

During his stay in Kenya the minister held side meetings with heads of delegations from Arab and foreign countries to discuss housing sector issues. He also met Kenyan officials to discuss questions of common concern to Jordan and Kenya.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Abdullah to patronise Yarmouk event

IRBID (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein will patronise the festivities to be held at Yarmouk University to mark the Battle of Yarmouk which was a turning point for the Islamic era.

Cabinet forms new board for ARC

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Tuesday decided to form a new board of directors for the Aqaba Railway Corporation (ARC) under the chairmanship of the minister of transport. Members of the board will include the corporation's director general as well as representatives from the Ministries of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Transport, Finance, Planning and the Jordan Phosphates Mines Company (JPMC). Two members will represent the private sector.

Muasher reviews plan for investment seminar

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Industry and Trade Rajai Muasher Tuesday chaired a meeting of a committee in charge of drawing up an orientation programme to be implemented in Kuwait on April 25 for promoting the investments in Jordan. During the meeting discussion covered projects in industry and tourism to be covered in the orientation programme. The meeting was attended by the ministry's under-secretary Mohammad Al Saqqaf and other senior officials.

Holland donates \$468,000 to UNRWA

AMMAN (Petra) — The Dutch government has made a donation of \$468,000 to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), thus raising its 1987 contribution to nearly \$3 million, according to an UNRWA spokesman. The spokesman said that last year Holland made a special contribution of \$669,000 to help implement health and education projects for Palestine refugees in addition to its annual contribution of \$2 million.

Oman, Jordan discuss admin systems

AMMAN (Petra) — Mr. Sa'duddin Jumaa, secretary general of the prime minister's office, Tuesday met with Mr. Mohammad Ibn Naser Alawi, head of the legislation bureau at the prime minister's office in Oman. During the meeting they discussed the Jordanian system of enacting laws and regulations.

Children to stage musical

AMMAN (J.T.) — Twenty five children and several professional actors will feature in a musical play, "The Green Path" which is expected to be staged Saturday under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor. The play, which will run for two weeks, tackles several contemporary humanitarian issues through dances, songs and cultural dialogue. The play comes within the framework of a theatrical programme recently adopted by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation with the aim of tapping theatre as a cultural and educational medium for children.

Children leave for festival in Turkey

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation of 21 children aged 12 to 14 years left for Turkey on Tuesday to take part in an international children's festival due to be held on Thursday. The delegation is led by Mr. Mohammad Qutaisah, head of the public relations department at the Ministry of Education. The 21-member group will present folklore performances which include songs and national dances.

NRA to take part in mining conference

AMMAN (Petra) — The Natural Resources Authority (NRA) will take part in a world mining conference to be held in Sweden towards the end of May. Mr. Qasem Al Omari from the NRA's geology and mining department will represent the authority at the five-day conference.

Regent visits Mafraq to involve local teachers in nationwide drive to improve education

MAFRAQ (Petra) — Workshop teams grouping educationalists and teachers have been formed in every governorate to discuss educational problems and means of promoting the educational process in the Kingdom, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, announced Tuesday.

Another report on the fast mail delivery system and the contacts for including more countries in the service was also reviewed at the meeting. To date, Jordan is linked with 20 Arab and foreign countries in the fast mail delivery system which was initiated last year. Directors of ministry departments submitted reports on the work of each section and proposals about training courses and seminars on postal affairs.

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A bogus plot to kill Reagan — another case of manipulation

By Lillian Craig Harris

THE full picture of Israel's efforts to manipulate American policy towards the Arabs remains obscure, but additional bits of the mosaic have recently been uncovered. Thanks to the Iranian revelations, evidence is at last being made public of an Israeli role in another dramatic American fiasco, the 1981 hysteria over alleged plans by Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi to assassinate Ronald Reagan. This evidence points towards an Israeli-sponsored disinformation campaign successfully directed at the United States.

... an unidentified third party had mounted a disinformation effort ... to keep U.S. anger focused on Libya.

Very early in the Reagan administration, it became clear that policy toward Libya would be almost exclusively in the hands of persons who were determined to teach Libya a military lesson in humility. There was a holy cause in which one could combat at once terrorists, Soviets and Arabs, three well-known sources of international disorder, anti-Americanism, and anti-Zionism.

visit.

Apart from medium-range missiles, East and West are also discussing long-range strategic missiles, space arms, chemical weapons, nuclear testing and conventional forces, but none of these talks appear close to agreement.

When the U.S.-Soviet arms talks in Geneva adjourned on March 26, the two sides were agreed on a deal that would abolish the 270 triple-warhead SS-20s and 316 single-warhead missiles and Pershing-2s currently deployed in Europe.

Each side would be allowed to retain 100 medium-range warheads in Soviet Asia and the United States respectively.

Prospects for an INF agreement improved after Gorbachev conceded in February that it need not depend on accords in the two other areas under discussion in Geneva — strategic weapons and space arms.

But, since then, the negotiations have bogged down over the short-range question.

Washington says that in the 500-1,000 kilometres bracket, the Soviet Union has up to 150 mod-

ern SS-12m and SS-23 missiles within range of Western Europe.

It says it has nothing comparable although some counts include 72 ageing Pershing-1s based in West Germany which can be fitted with nuclear warheads held by U.S. forces.

A draft INF treaty presented by the United States last month called for equal ceilings for both sides on short-range missiles, which would in effect allow the West to build up to Soviet levels. The Soviets rejected this proposal.

Gorbachev's latest offer showed awareness of the short-range problem, but was unsatisfactory to NATO on at least two counts.

While the Americans want short-range constraints as part of an INF treaty, the Soviet leader proposed separate talks in the two other areas under discussion in Geneva — strategic weapons and space arms.

But, since then, the negotiations have bogged down over the short-range question.

Gorbachev also proposed an interim freeze by both sides on short-range systems, but the West

says this would enshrine the existing Soviet superiority.

Some officials in Britain, West Germany and France are also worried by the whole trend of the arms control dialogue.

The West raised short-range missiles as an objection to an INF deal but Gorbachev's offer to do away with such missiles has raised Western fears of a steady advance towards the de-nuclearisation of Europe.

This is a stated Soviet objective, but it alarms NATO, whose basic strategy of "flexible response" means it reserves the right to use nuclear weapons against a massive Warsaw Pact attack with conventional forces.

Washington would like an agreement to deploy the futuristic "Star Wars" weapons being researched under SDI after a certain time limit had elapsed, while Moscow wants to block the programme.

The status of other arms control talks is as follows:

Nuclear testing — the United

States and Soviet Union cannot

agree on the aim of their talks.

Moscow says it is a total test ban,

but Washington says it is how to

verify existing treaties limiting

the size of tests. The United

States says it will continue testing

as long as it depends on nuclear

weapons.

Chemical weapons — the West

has welcomed a new Soviet can-

cerous about its possession of such

weapons. But 40-nation talks in

Geneva have not yet reached

agreement on ways of verifying a

chemical weapons ban.

Conventional forces — NATO

and Warsaw Pact officials in

Vienna are discussing a mandate

for new talks on Europe-wide

force reductions. But Gor-

bachev's call in Prague for 35-

nation talks on tactical nuclear

arms and conventional forces and

weapons appeared to signal im-

patience with these discussions.

members of the Reagan administration, apparently including CIA Director William Casey. This, we are now told, was due to Israeli intercession on his behalf.

A good summary of the methodology and mentality which allowed American officials to succumb to Israeli manipulation was given by an NSC member shortly before the American bombing of Tripoli last April. Reminded that White House policy assumed not to take into consideration the possible negative implications for Libya, or even for North African security more broadly, this gentleman (now defrocked) assured me that negative consequences for Libya, no matter what, "are in no way a consideration of this administration." Just so.

By then, of course, Ollie North and company already had the bit in their teeth and were moving forward on a variety of clandestine fronts for which the potential negative effects had not been considered. The Israelis could not have been happy over the prospect that Qadhafi, whose image as the face of Arab evil is very useful, might be blown away by U.S. bombers. But they must have been overjoyed by the American descent into violence against the Arabs. To an even greater extent than the earlier U.S. naval bombardment of Lebanon, the air attack on Libya

represented success for Israeli policy. There could have been no better way to deflect U.S. criticism of Israel's own violent policies, in particular violence against Lebanon, against Iraq (the nuclear reactor), and against Tunisia (the PLO headquarters).

But there's one more bit of the mosaic. Having forfeited some of their best allies in Washington, the Israelis are now apparently casting about for ways to make up the loss. According to Abu Abdallah, London representative of the Libyan National Salvation Front (LNSF), Israel has recently approached several anti-Qadhafi exile groups offering both funds and information in exchange for "a relationship." The LNSF says it rebuffed the Israeli ploy which it believes must stem from a desire to influence exile activities and to open a channel to those who, should they eventually come to power, could perhaps be persuaded to take a less antagonistic posture toward Israel.

This is all very curious and even a bit sad particularly in light of Abu Abdallah's criticism of recent U.S. policy toward Libya and his plaintive remark that, "We never knew the U.S. didn't have any contacts in the Libyan military." That, of course, was a lesson we should all have learned back in 1981 — Middle East International, London.

Medium-range missiles best hope for arms deal but problems remain

By Patrick Worsnip

Reuter

MOSCOW — Medium-range missiles present the best prospect of a U.S.-Soviet arms deal in the near future but major obstacles remain to be overcome as Secretary of State George Shultz starts three days of talks in Moscow.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev sought to address the main outstanding problem when he offered last week immediate talks on missiles that fall just short of the medium-range category.

But his proposal, in a speech in Prague on Friday, apparently failed to meet the fears of leading NATO countries that an agreement on intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) will leave them vulnerable to Soviet shorter-range missiles.

INF missiles are those with a range of 1,000-5,000 kilometres and include the Soviet SS-20 and U.S. cruise missiles and Pershing-2. The shorter-range missiles mentioned by Gorbachev have a range of 500-1,000 kilometres.

Arms control is expected to be the dominating theme of Shultz's

visit.

Apart from medium-range missiles, East and West are also discussing long-range strategic missiles, space arms, chemical weapons, nuclear testing and conventional forces, but none of these talks appear close to agreement.

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will be around for some time and this is recognised abroad, not least in Mr. Gorbachev's treatment of Mrs. Thatcher.

After all the excitement and euphoria, there is a clear danger of *hubris* — but not perhaps as long as Sir Geoffrey remains foreign secretary — *Financial Times* feature.

LETTERS

High time for educational reforms

AFTER reading Dr. Abu Jaber's articles in the Jordan Times concerning education, I agree wholeheartedly that it's high time to re-evaluate the whole system of education in this country.

Look at the advances made by Japan, a country like Jordan that has very limited natural resources. Their educational system is not perfect but, it is augmented by a social system which respects and values individual achievement. As Dr. Abu Jaber pointed out, Jordan's network of familial ties is fragmented and distorted due to modernisation and fast-paced social change. Hence, it becomes the task of the educational system to address this issue and re-define itself towards a better utilisation of our most important resource, our children, citizens of the future.

At present, we are steeped in a rigid system of rote learning, leading eventually to the rigid high school entry and *Tawjih* exams. What is the future of those students not passing these exams? A very limited system of training leading to nondescript, low-paying jobs is their fate. If it is deemed necessary that students are to be eliminated from the formal educational system, it is a natural expectation that they be provided with up-to-date skills training. If we acknowledge that Jordan is suffering the pangs of growth, we cannot fairly expect our children to proceed with a rigorous course of study of which we cannot guarantee the end result. Is it fair to overburden the already stressful teenage years with the disgrace and disfavour which failing to succeed in the examinations brings? And to further fan the flames by thrusting them into menial job training? What about a second chance for "late bloomers"?

I would add in closing that there are numerous experts on education in Jordan and, various experimental methods of teaching are already in progress. There is no need to import a system of expertise to deal with this crisis. Valuable insights and experiences are at our fingertips so we don't have to look very far to find the road to improvement.

As a teacher and a mother, I applaud Crown Prince Hassan's appeal to the nation to make our future bright by developing the natural dignity of our children through meaningful education.

Marianne Nsoum
Amman.

Save our children

HER MAJESTY Queen Noor set a good example for all Jordanian women and our society at large when she called at a health centre in the outskirts of Amman on Monday to receive immunisation against the neo-natal tetanus disease. The Queen's initiative, marking the launching of a new drive in Jordan's national immunisation campaign against two major killer diseases — measles and neo-natal tetanus — reflects Her Majesty's personal concern and that of Jordan at the top level, over the safety of our children, in order to protect them from inevitable death caused by major killer diseases. These diseases, namely tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio and measles, claim the lives of 600 children a day in the Arab World, and 8,000 children a day throughout the world. In other words, these diseases kill one child every two minutes, thus making their global annual death toll come to 3.5 million children a year. Measles and neo-natal tetanus coverage in Jordan had been particularly low compared with vaccination against the other diseases, and as such we can only hope that the new push would succeed in encouraging more Jordanian women inoculated against them.

The deaths caused by the major killer diseases in only four days almost equal the toll caused by the atomic bomb that was dropped on the Japanese town of Hiroshima. These shocking facts unfortunately have not so far received the due attention and response they deserve at the universal level, as millions of children are still needlessly dying without their deaths being considered big and shocking news as is the case when a plane crashes or an earthquake takes the lives of people in certain parts of the world.

It is time we directed special attention to these silent emergencies which claim more lives than wars do; and it is time that we here in Jordan and the rest of the Arab World embarked on concerted action to save our children from the worst effects of killer diseases.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Israel shows its real face

FOR the second time within one week the Israelis show the world their true criminal face in the occupied Arab territory. They have destroyed and pillaged Qalqilia and Birzeit, two Arab towns in the occupied territory, killing and wounding their residents and burning their trees and crops in total defiance of the world community and disregard to any principles. We do not believe that the international community requires more evidence about Zionist racism and about the blood thirsty invaders of our land who continue to exercise terrorist and repressive measures against the Arab population. The heroic resistance of the Arab people is turning the military machinery of the occupation authorities into a mockery through their continued struggle and their steadfastness. The Arab residents are continuing to resist repressive actions by Zionists bent on destroying Arab property and killing and wounding Arab inhabitants. The Israeli crimes are being committed in the occupied territory while the whole world continues to hear and watch, and those who claim to be keen on safeguarding human rights remain silent about such atrocities committed by a state that they call democratic and civilised. The attacks on the Arabs and their property in the West Bank resemble a movie picture with the marauders pillaging and looting an area where they also leave a trail of destruction behind. We salute the Arab people under Israeli occupation and say that after this round they will no doubt come out stronger and more determined to pursue the struggle for freedom.

Al Dustour: Struggle for freedom continues

THE barbaric attacks on the Arab population and the destruction of Arab property in the West Bank came in reply to the burning of one car owned by a Jewish settler who ventured into the city of Qalqilia. The Israelis and the Zionist settlers did not need an excuse for committing their new crimes in Qalqilia and Birzeit nor did they need any preparation for their action because they have already planned to get rid of the Arabs through hysterical actions as those that were committed over the past two days. The reply to calls from the Arab population to regain their rights was fire and destruction and killing and wounding of university students. The Israelis are drunk with their arrogance and blinded by their fanaticism that they cannot but impose such repressive rules on the Arabs who are only armed with faith, stones and their hands. With more crimes, the Israelis hope to fulfil the spirit of resistance and struggle among the Arabs, but it is clear for all that the more repressive actions are committed the more determined the Arabs will be in their resistance, steadfastness and struggle for freedom.

Sawt Al Shaab: Israel escalates repressive measures

THE Israelis on Monday added one more crime to their record over the past 20 years of occupation in the West Bank. They killed one student from Birzeit University and wounded seven others with their bullets and their war machine. Their crime in Birzeit is no different from that committed in Qalqilia the day before, and the long series of crimes committed against the Arabs ever since the creation of the Jewish state in Palestine. The new crime is part of the escalating Israeli repressive measures being directed against the Arab people under occupation, and is an extension of the atrocities and acts of terrorism committed against the Arab people in all the other towns and villages in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights. The Israelis, the Zionist settlers with their armoured cars and their guns and bombs will never be able to stifle the spirit of resistance and the struggle of the Arab population; and the iron fist policy will end up in total failure. The more brutal the Israelis become the harder will be the resistance which is a rightful act for people seeking freedom and liberation from occupation.

Outcome of Yugoslav strikes show power of Croatia

By Peter Humphrey

Reuter

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia — Croatia, the region worst hit by a wave of strikes in Yugoslavia last month, has displayed its powerful clout in the country by winning the Korean Airlines plane but there has been gradual progress with Mrs. Thatcher's visit to Hungary in 1984, Sir Geoffrey's tours around East European capitals

Croatia's 1.6 million workforce profits enormously from the tourist revenues of its long Adriatic coast and from having most of Yugoslavia's oil resources.

In its capital Zagreb chic boutiques stand out in sharp contrast to the dull shops of Belgrade and other towns in the south of Yugoslavia. There are scores of private shops and restaurants here, while the south is only hesitantly allowing the private sector to grow.

It was Yugoslavia's inflation, with prices of essential goods soaring daily, that prompted Prime Minister Branko Mikulic to control wages and then prices, along with other economic measures.

In France, new works by 2 writers lament demise of intellectuals

By Richard Bernstein

PARIS — He is known just by his initials, B.H.L., in the way some of the legendary film actors of France, like Fernandel and Raimu, used to be called only by single names, which were emblems of nationwide recognition.

Bernard-Henri Levy, the writer and philosopher, is not a movie star. But he is often pictured in the glossy French magazines in carefully framed profile, or staring slightly downward at the camera with a look of calculated intensity in his eyes, his long hair silhouetted against background lights and his shirt unbuttoned nearly to the waist.

Mr. Levy, 38, is a commentator and thinker about town very much in the French mold, a man who writes about such difficult subjects as Marxism, structuralism, existentialism and freedom, while living a publicly flamboyant life. He admires to a certain narcissism. He is always studiously casual, and is frequently on television and setting all sorts of

fashions.

His 1977 book, "Barbarism With a Human Face," was a sensation in France, a point of repair for the group that was then coming to be known as the New Philosophers, still the dominant current in French intellectual life.

The book marked a decisive rejection of Marxist totalitarianism, which it described in entirely negative terms, something the previous generation of French thinkers, dominated by leftist sentiment, had been loath to do.

Now Mr. Levy has created new controversy, by publishing a slender volume called "Eloge des Intellectuels," or "Elegy for the Intellectuals."

The book is both a lament and an accusation against his own kind, in which he argues that the serious thinkers on moral and political issues in France have in recent years lost their historic role. They are suffering a "disgrace, a discredit, a muted disqualification" such that France, the country that invented the concept of the intellectual, "does not know what to think of them

anymore."

"Intellectuals are neither hated nor vilified nor even really denounced," Mr. Levy writes, lamenting past days when French political thinkers were taken seriously enough to be made to suffer for their ideas.

"Elegy for the Intellectuals" is one of two works attracting attention in Paris these days that, taken together, reflect a kind of pause, a sense of alarm, and maybe even a new stage in the life of the mind in France.

Both are marked by varying degrees of nostalgia, pessimism and disillusionment over the intellectual profession, which has been both worshipped and ostracized with a heated sort of passion that itself is one of the chief characteristics of the French people.

The other book, "La Defaite de la Pensée," or "The Failure of Thought," by Alain Finkielkraut, is being reviewed together with Mr. Levy's slender volume, is a somewhat thicker, more deliberate, and, according to some, more probing work. One of Mr. Finkielkraut's themes, at times overlapping that of the Levy volume, is the decline of cultural standards.

Mr. Finkielkraut, a 38-year-old writer whose previous books have been widely admired in



Bernard-Henri Levy

France, concentrates on what he sees as an attack on the fundamental values established in the 18th-century French enlightenment.

But his historical excursion is aimed at explaining why, as he sees it, cultural standards have shrunk into insignificance as cultural figures have been transformed from elites of taste and discrimination into creatures of the mass media marketplace.

"The boundary line between culture and entertainment has become blurry," Mr. Finkielkraut writes.

A similar point, although expressed differently, is getting most of the attention in Mr. Levy's book. It is his charge that a group of popular stars have, in the country of Montaigne and Voltaire, Zola and Camus, replaced serious thinkers as the most conspicuous trendsetters, commentators and spiritual guides of France.

Mr. Levy specifically mentions a popular singer of satirical songs named Renaud, who was invited some time ago to appear on

France's highest-brow literary programme. Among the others is Bernard Tapie, a wealthy businessman and the star of a television programme called "Ambition," who has made free enterprise into a glitzy sort of media campaign.

These are "appealing figures," Mr. Levy writes. But in the context of French intellectual history, they mark a decline. They are basically too simple and monotonous.

Yet, Mr. Levy concludes, their prominence signals a real political danger, because, as he puts it, intellectual "clarity," an appreciation of complexity, and the ability to make learned distinctions are among the fundamental conditions of democratic life.

Referring to past figures like Sartre, Camus and Mauriac, Mr. Levy said: "Because they wrote novels, and because their talent was recognised, they were authorised and required to intervene in the issues of the day and to say, rightly or wrongly, what was true and good. This profile is very French" — New York Times

Efforts underway to launch international space studies project

By Duncan Mansfield

The Associated Press

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts

Mankind's conquest of space will require international cooperation and a pooling of resources, say planners of an educational endeavour called the international space university project.

"We have one chance and only one chance to move into space as one species. Right now," said Peter H. Diamandis, chairman of the project's founding conference this weekend at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"If we move out into space as nationalists with nationalistic interests, it will remain that way."

Some 60 delegates from Canada, the United States, Europe, India, Japan, the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union hope to create a "university" for post graduate students from around the world that would provide advanced instruction in space-related fields.

The aim is both to enhance space curricula and to set the stage for international cooperation.

"It's interdependency that we are trying to build this institution upon," said Todd Hawley, executive director of Space Generation Foundation Inc., a Washington-based non-profit organisation that coordinated the weekend

conference.

"It's the whole sense that there's a definitive need at the outset to interlink nations, to pool resources, to create a sense of teamwork in doing things that benefit humanity as whole," Hamley said.

Space university already has gained an impressive list of backers.

Author Arthur C. Clarke is a project trustee, and advisers to the founding conference included Harvard President Derek Bok, MIT President Paul Gray, Apollo 17 astronaut Harrison Schmitt, and Ian Pryke, head of the European Space Agency's Washington office.

And MIT has offered to host space university's first term — a three-month session in the summer of 1988.

Organisers say that with a planned budget of \$1.3 million garnered from corporate and foundation contributors, as many as 100 students will be able to attend.

"The end goal, which I will not put a time factor on but I will say we want to work towards, is having facilities in orbit," said Diamandis, a student jointly pursuing a medical degree at Harvard Medical School and a doctorate in aerospace engineering at MIT.

Swedish spy season opens

Sara Webb reports on a nation's obsession with submarines and other suspicious vehicles making their way from the East as the seas and roads unfreeze.

STOCKHOLM — Come the

summer, a new emergency telephone service in Sweden will mark the start of another submarine-spotters season. Anyone who sees a suspicious grey object lurking offshore should head immediately for the nearest telephone kiosk, dial 90000, and report it to the submarine watchdog.

Some Europeans go in for bird-watching, train-spotting or sightings of unidentified flying objects (UFOs). The Swedes have an obsession with submarines and other spying vehicles, which most recently have included long-distance lorries from the Soviet Union, Poland and East Germany.

Their fears are not entirely groundless: the famous "Whisky-on-the-rocks affair" in 1981 when a Soviet nuclear-armed Whisky-class submarine ran aground in restricted waters outside the Karlskrona naval base reminded Swedes of the vulnerability of their coastline.

Since then, they have found

Soviet mini-submarines

trailing the cutting edge of the country's defence against intruding submarines — as "metal monstrosities," which were not worth wasting money on as they were only used by navy captains for showing off.

He had to spend the next few days apologising profusely on television and radio in order to placate the irate naval staff. More recently, he has been criticised for failing to do anything about another Swedish bugbear: the

squadrons of Eastern bloc "spy lorries" which transport goods between Stockholm and the southern Swedish ports of Gothenburg and Malmö.

These have been found meandering down small lanes, miles from the main roads which they are supposed to follow and in some cases suspiciously close to restricted military zones.

— Financial Times feature.



Berlin celebrates 750th birthday

Schauspielhaus concert hall (left) and Französischer Dom (French Cathedral) in Platz der Akademie (Square of the Academy) are festively illuminated. A concert given for guests from home and abroad there on New Year's Eve solemnly opened the celebrations marking the 750th anniversary of Berlin. Schauspielhaus — the famous Schinkel building which had been destroyed in World War II — was rebuilt and opened as concert hall on October 1, 1984 — ADN.

New supernova returns, more brilliant than ever

By Kevin Noblet
The Associated Press

based astronomer, Canadian Ian Shelton of the Las Campanas Observatory. Its appearance electrified stargazers, who turned scores of powerful earth-based and satellite telescopes on the phenomenon.

The new star, which scientists dubbed "1987A," became brighter for five days as expected, and many astronomers predicted it would quickly reach a visual magnitude of 1, or significantly brighter than the North Star.

Observers were disappointed when instead it dimmed slightly.

However, since March 3, its brilliance again has increased, reaching a visual magnitude of 3.63 on Tuesday night, according to Williams and other astronomers. That compares with a lesser magnitude of 4.5 on Feb. 28. The smaller the number, the brighter:

the North Star's magnitude is 2. There's no precedent for this.

Williams said in a telephone interview from the observatory funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation.

"It's like the Dow Jones average — it keeps rising and setting new records."

The supernova, created by the

collapse and spectacular explosion of a dying star 170,000 light-years away, is the closest to earth since 1604. In most of the Northern Hemisphere, it is hidden from view by the horizon, but it is easily visible south of the equator.

Experts are befuddled by its baffling brightness.

"It's going to provide a lot of work for the theoreticians, who will have to do a lot of revising," said Cristiani Stefano of the La

Silla Observatory, near El Tolo.

Scientists have defined two types of supernovas. A Type I supernova is produced by the dense remains of an ordinary star that draws mass from a nearby large star. A Type II supernova is created by the collapse of a giant dying star, acting alone.

Stefano said the new supernova's behaviour appears to be proving the theory that there are more than two types of supernovas.

The supernova may be growing brighter because it is expanding in size more quickly than it is cooling off, Stefano speculated.

The highly energised material known as an envelope, produced by the explosion is moving away from the core at about 6,000 miles a second, he said.

Pluto much smaller than assumed

By Hermann-Michael Hahn

THE American astronomer Clyde Tombaugh discovered the planet Pluto in 1930. 56 years later, two astronomers from Berlin Technical University, presently working at the European Southern Observatory (ESO) on Mount La Silla, Chile, accurately measured Pluto's diameter for the first time: it is 2,200 kilometres. Thus, this planet is not only the farthest removed from the sun, it is also the smallest in the solar system. In fact, Pluto is not half as big as originally assumed.

Two facts made such an exact measurement possible. First, the American astronomer James Christy located a Pluto satellite in the summer of 1978. Second, it subsequently turned out to be possible in the second half of the 1980s for astronomers on earth to have a side-view of the satellite as it travelled sharply inclined toward Pluto's orbital plane. Thus, it should prove possible during a single orbit to establish the extent to which the two celestial bodies covered, i.e. eclipsed, each other. The reduction of total light during this process would permit direct conclusions to be drawn concerning the dimensions of the two bodies in question. The technique has long been used to

determine diameter in the case of closely located stars.

Preliminary test measurements in April 1985 revealed that the orbital path of Charon, as Christy had dubbed his discovery, was not lined up precisely enough with the earth at that point in time. The situation did not improve until the spring of 1986.

When, on the night of April 2, Manfred Pakull and Klaus Reinsch sighted Pluto with a 2.2-metre mirror on loan to ESO from the Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (Max Planck Society), they registered a light reduction to the order of about 0.2 as the shadow of the Pluto satellite crossed the planet's surface. Two-and-a-half orbits later, on April 18, the Berlin guest astronomers, who were now using a 1.5-metre telescope made available by Denmark, were able to track Charon as it disappeared behind Pluto.

A careful evaluation of the light curves provided the most accurate values ever obtained on the respective sizes of Pluto and Charon and the distance between them. Charon, with a diameter of 1,160 kilometres, is half the size of Pluto. It moves around the planet in an almost circular orbit at a distance of 19,000 kilometres. — The German Research Service, Bonn.

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Jordan Rally rolls off today

By P.V. Vivekanand
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Exciting and thrilling as rallying events in Jordan are to enthusiasts, this year's Jordan rally holds out all promises of being unique in more ways than one for the participants and rally fans as well as the organisers of the event.

The 1,360-kilometre, three-day event that kicks off from the Roman Amphitheatre in downtown Amman at 4:30 this afternoon brings together for the first time in Jordan driving talent from the Arab Gulf, Lebanon and Cyprus to Finland and the Soviet Union to match with the skills of Jordanian drivers.

Leading the list of the 47 participants — a record in itself for a rally in Jordan — are familiar names like Qatar's Saeed Al Hajri, the Arab World's number one rally ace, the UAE's Mohammad Ibn Sulayem, the reigning champion of the region, Finland's Lasse Lampi who figures among the top eight rally drivers in the world, Michel Saleh of Lebanon, a veteran who has consistently fought to gain top slots in various Middle East events, Antoine Georgiou, noted rally driver from Oman, and Christos Eliades, one of the top drivers from Cyprus. Ahmad Khalifeh and Abdullah Omar Al Majid of the UAE, Ahmad Al Zafari of Kuwait, Ibrahim Madhloom of Bahrain, Mohammad Sbitan and Ahmad Ilawi of Saudi Arabia, and Lester Fetherstonehaugh of Britain are others to be watched out for resounding performances.

Added to the already impressive arena is a team of five top Soviet drivers, whose thundering Lada 2105 VFTS would be breaking new ground in the Jordanian countryside and desert over the next three days. The Lada team includes some of the most skilled and renowned Soviet drivers such

as 11-year national champion Stas Brouzda, eight-time national champion Eouguenius Toumaliavichus and Ivars Tsaoone, who won the national championship twice between 1983 and 1986.

Against such heavy competition, Jordan is lining up the talents of His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, the reigning national champion, Nabil Karam, Hani Bisharat, Haile Aguilar — a veteran with more than 30 years of driving experience — George Khayyat, Haitham Mufti and Issa Halabi. In addition, there are another 23 entries from Jordan, some of whom have rendered excellent performances in past rallying events in the Kingdom.

However, conspicuous by their absence in the Jordanian list are George Haddad and Nabil Dri.

For the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ), the organisers of the event, this year's Jordan Rally, the third leg of the 1987 Middle East rally championship, will be the culmination of years of concentrated efforts towards securing a place for Jordan Rally in the world championship series. FISA, the international authority in rallying, is sending senior observers to assess the conduct of the event for possible inclusion of Jordan Rally as one of the 12 events of the 1988 world championship.

Jordan Rally, a regular annual event since 1981, secured FISA recognition as a world class event since 1982 and the RACJ was

informed last year that the 1987 rally would be the determining factor in securing a place for Jordan in the world championship series.

Some RACJ officials say the 1987 rally has brought an unusual kind of cooperative spirit among the various concerned authorities who have thrown all their weight behind the RACJ's efforts and coordinated with the club to make the sportive event an all-out success in every way.

"People have realised how important it is to Jordan to secure a slot in the world series," commented an official. "They are offering their utmost cooperation to make the rally, as well as future events in the Kingdom, an example in organisation and conduct."

From Hajri's Porsche 911 SCRS, Ibn Sulayem's Toyota Celica, Prince Abdullah's Opel Manta and Lampi's Mitsubishi station to Saleh's Audi Quattro, Aguilar's Nissan 240 R.S., Fetherstonehaugh's Volvo 240 T and Abdul Ilah Malhas' Land Rover Pickup, most of the participant vehicles are specially-built to withstand the tough, gruelling journey across the Kingdom.

A further split-up of the entry list shows that Toyota leads the list with a total of eight entries — from Celica Twincam Turbo to Celica G.T. — followed by Nissan with seven 240 R.S. and one Datsun 210, Lada with six entries — the five-member Soviet team is here as unofficial observers at the Jordan Rally. The delegation is encouraging Jordanian and other drivers to take part in the 1987 Thousand Lakes Rally which is scheduled to be held on Aug. 26.

Three Daihatsu charmers and one each of Daihatsu Charade and Daihatsu Rocky, two Mitsubishi, two Volvo, one Seat Ibiza, one Mazda 929 and one Renault 17 complete the line-up.

Amman Mayor Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh will flag off the cars from the Thousand Lakes Rally

from the Roman Amphitheatre on a course towards the ancient Greco-Roman city of Jerash in the north and back to the Amman Marriott Hotel. The vehicles will race off towards Petra on the second day and regroup at the Petra Forum Hotel for the night.

The starting point for the third and final day of the event is at the Petra Guest House at Qatraneh from where the cars will begin the return leg to Amman through the King's Highway, one of the oldest trade routes in the world.

Special stages where the drivers will face the real test of driving skills and vehicle stability are included throughout the three-day race.

According to RACJ press releases, it is not only the legal FISA definition that makes the Jordan Rally an international event but also the exceptional nature of the terrain involved in its route.

The mountainous zigzags on the Amman-Jerash leg resemble those of the Monte Carlo Rally and the gravel special stages dotted with olive trees are similar to those of the Acropolis Rally, says the club. It also notes that the desert terrain in Jordan is similar to that of the Safari Rally and the "soft routes" — regular road sections — resemble part of the Paris-Dakar Rally.

A Finnish team representing the Thousand Lakes Rally of Finland, one of the current 12 world championship series, is here as unofficial observers at the Jordan Rally. The delegation is encouraging Jordanian and other drivers to take part in the 1987 Thousand Lakes Rally which is

scheduled to be held on Aug. 26. The Finnish event enjoys distinction since many of Finland's world reputed drivers, including Timo Salonen, Markku Alen and Juha Kankunen, "graduated" from the Thousand Lakes Rally



His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah during a training session for the 1987 Jordan Rally with his team-mates Amr Bilbeisi, (third from left), who navigates the Prince's Opel Manta, and Nabil Karam, driver of the number two car in the team.

in the European circuit, and Royal Jordanian Silk Cut team-mates Amr Bilbeisi, (third from left), who navigates the Prince's Opel Manta, and Nabil Karam, driver of the number two car in the team.

before ahead to win other legs of the world championship series.

Competition is expected to be keen in the Jordan Rally between Hajri and Ibn Sulayem. Hajri, who is staging an impressive comeback to the Middle East rallying circuit after an absence of one year during which he went on the European circuit, has already won the first two legs — Qatar and Kuwait — of the 1987 championship.

Ibn Sulayem, who won the 1986 title, seems determined not to lose sight of the Qatari rallying ace and is closely behind. But, both of them have to contend with the challenge put in by Lampi and the Soviets, not to mention Prince Abdullah, who secured third overall place in the 1986 Jordan Rally.

In this year's race for the Kingdom's national championship, Prince Abdullah tops the list with his victory in the Jan. 29 Jerash Rally, the first of eight national

events and six foreign events included in the championship series. The Prince entered the Feb. 19-20 Qatar Rally with Nabil Karam and Issa Halabi, making up the rest of the three-member Jordanian team but had to abandon the race due to mechanical problems.

Karam, his teammate in the Royal Jordanian Silk Cut Team, secured fifth overall place in Qatar. Prince Abdullah did not enter the March 19-20 Kuwait Rally.

The next three legs of the Middle East championship are scheduled to be held in Lebanon on Oct. 9-11, Oman on Oct. 28-30 and Dubai on Dec. 3-4. All these events, as well as the Sept. 25-27 Cyprus Rally, make up the foreign rallies included in this year's national championship.

N. Korea prepares to stage Olympics

On Monday, North Korea said it is still preparing to stage part of the 1988 summer Olympics in Pyongyang, despite disagreement with the IOC over how many events would be staged in the north.

"We are making every effort to offer excellent sports facilities and ensure all conveniences to sportsmen, officials, reporters and tourists in case the Olympic co-hosting is realised and the Olympic games are held in Pyongyang," North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency reported, quoting a North Korean Olympic committee spokesman.

The agency, monitored in Tokyo, said North Korea is building an Olympic village with more than 10 gyms and stadiums, including a large-scale modern sports complex capable of seating 150,000 people.

The spokesman called for an early fourth round of talks with the IOC in Lausanne, Switzerland, to discuss issues ranging from the number of Olympic events to "the name, formation of the organising committee and opening and closing ceremonies of the games."

In February, North Korea accepted "in principle" an offer from Mr. Samaranch and South Korea to stage four Olympic events including table tennis, archery, a cycling road race and some preliminary soccer matches in the north.

But North Korea still is demanding that it be allowed to stage at least eight events and has threatened to lead an East Bloc boycott if its demands are not met.

In March, the agency quoted Mr. Chin Chung Guk, vice chairman of the North Korean Olympic Committee, as saying the north was not rejecting the IOC proposal, but that "our side should host one-third of the 23 events" in view of the population proportion in the north and the south."

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Anti-apartheid leaders vow to defy new Pretoria rules

This story was written under South Africa's state of emergency which imposes severe reporting restrictions

CAPE TOWN (R) — Anti-apartheid church leaders have vowed to defy a government ban on campaigning for the release of thousands of people held without trial under South Africa's 10-month-old state of emergency.

The authorities, facing an up-
roar from civil rights groups and the English-language press, sought to play down the ban, saying it did not stop prayers for the release of a detainee and did not apply to candidates in the May 6 whites-only general election.

"I will urge my congregations to take part in a campaign and to do so peacefully and non-violently, whatever the consequences for me," Nobel Peace Prize laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu told a service in Cape Town Monday.

Tutu was loudly applauded by his mainly-white congregation when he said he would appeal to the authorities to free all detainees and asked whether the congregation supported him.

The Anglican Archbishop, who said he feared the weekend ban could outlaw even public prayers for detainees, was joined by Jewish, Catholic and Non-Conformist churchmen.

Black U.S. Ambassador Edward Perkins, who attended the service, made his strongest public criticism to date of South African policies, saying in a statement that his government would continue to protest at detentions.

Civil rights groups say 30,000 people have been detained at various stages since the emergency was declared in June last year.

Sri Lanka makes New Year call for peace

COLOMBO (R) — The Sri Lankan government called Tuesday for an end to the island's ethnic war as the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamil communities celebrated the dawn of their New Year.

"Let us forget past differences and enemies and take the hand of peace," said Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa, in a New Year message. "Let us accept as brothers and sisters those of the other communities who are culturally and otherwise close to us."

Last Saturday the government announced a unilateral 10-day ceasefire in its war with Tamil separatist rebels, saying Sri Lankans should be able to celebrate the New Year peacefully.

It said the truce was also aimed

at supporting efforts by India to help find a peaceful solution to the conflict in which more than 5,000 people have been killed in four years.

But the ceasefire was rejected by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, most powerful of the guerrilla groups fighting for an independent Tamil homeland.

A Tigers' spokesman told reporters at their headquarters in the south Indian city of Madras that the government move was a ruse to give war-weary soldiers a rest.

The council of Hindu organisations, representing Tamils, welcomed the government ceasefire in a New Year message and appealed to the rebels to respond positively.

A government spokesman said security forces had been given

strict orders not to attack the rebels during the truce period unless they came under extreme provocation.

Meanwhile Time magazine quoted a Sri Lankan official as saying President Junius Jayewardene will visit India and sign an agreement with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi if negotiations with Tamil rebels succeed.

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali said "Jayewardene would fly to New Delhi and sign a memorandum of understanding" with Mr. Gandhi if the talks are successful, facing the southern African region as a whole.

In Johannesburg South African state radio scorned Zimbabwe's reported purchase of advanced Soviet MiG-29 aircraft, describing the alleged deal as an economic gamble.

"Experts are doubtful whether Zimbabweans will even be able to fly the MiG-29 interceptor planes or operate the radar systems for them," the radio said in its daily commentary, which closely echoes government thinking.

Quoting intelligence sources in Washington, the report said the United States feared South Africa might be tempted to launch pre-emptive air strikes on bases where the planes are to be based or to intercept Soviet transports carrying them in order to preserve its air superiority in the region.

Asked to comment on the report, State Department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley told reporters: "If the news reports are true, we would certainly have concerns about the military, political, and financial implications for Zimbabwe and for the southern African region as a whole."

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